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Leveling the Scales:
Balancing Operational Security and a Free Press

by
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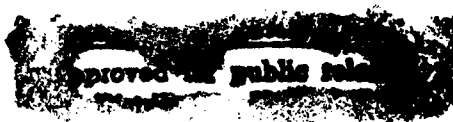


A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Operations Department.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College

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ABSTRACT

An analysis of military media relations involving first amendment rights and operational security. Media coverage of future military operations may provide invaluable information to our enemy that could compromise operations or cause U.S. Forces to suffer unnecessary casualties. The military and the media do not agree on what procedures will best serve the free press while insuring operational security. This paper addresses the strengths and weaknesses of the DOD press pool and provides recommendations for development of Public Affairs Annexes for future operations. The author's thesis is that a well thought out Public Affairs Annex will be imperative to ensure a balance between a free press and operational security.

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Preface

Even in wartime, Americans have questioned censorship. The Commander in Chief has the duty to protect the lives of the soldiers under his command. But the press has the obligation to seek the truth and inform the public in war as well as peacetime. Therefore, an inherent conflict exists between the right to a free press and the need to control information and media access that may compromise combat operations. The United States military has made a concerted effort to improve procedures for affording the press access to the military operations through the use of DOD pools. Operation Desert Storm received more live coverage than any operation in history. Yet, the media has complained that the pools are too restrictive and deny a free press. The military/media relations challenge is to develop effective procedures that will balance free press and operational security.

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Leveling the scales:

Balancing operational security and a free press.

CHAPTER I

Thesis

Like it or not, the new media is here to stay. The commander in chief of future regional contingencies must develop and execute a well thought out media campaign plan that balances operational security with the public's right to know.

Before the United States commits combat forces abroad, there must be some reasonable assurance we will have the support of the American people and their elected representatives in Congress. The role of the news media in our society provides the linkage within Clausewitz's trinity between the people, the government and the military by shaping and molding public opinion. While political, military and, to some degree, economic power are instruments of the government, psychological power is often facilitated by the news media.

Therefore, the presence of journalists in war zones is not a luxury, but a necessity. Imperfect as it is, our independent press serves as a vital link between the battlefield and the home front, reporting on the military's¹ successes, failures and sacrifices. By doing so, the media has helped to foster citizen involvement and support which is essential to military success.

Freedom of the press, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, is a basic tenet of the American government. "Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or the press." These words provide a potential conflict of interest between military operations and media coverage, which has resulted in an antagonistic relationship between the media and the ² military. In times of national crisis such as wars, reporting friendly information can compromise operational security. Recognizing the dangers facing our nation, Americans have generally accepted some sort of censorship during wars. Even many fervent civil libertarians agree that the military deserves and requires protection during wartime. But such censorship contradicts the guarantee of a free press and limits the public's right to know.

The U.S. Army's war fighting doctrine FM 100-5 identifies protection as a dynamic of combat power. Protection is essential to conserve the fighting potential of the force so the CINC can apply it at the decisive time and place. Operations security enhances freedom of action by reducing vulnerability to hostile acts, influence, or surprise. The CINC is responsible for establishing measures to protect information that may place his operation in jeopardy.

In this paper, I will first provide some background information leading to the development of the DOD press

pool. Next, I will analyze strengths and weaknesses of the DOD press pool and attempt to reveal what techniques were most effective in balancing a free press and operational security. I will discuss perceptions of the DOD Press Pools as seen through the perspective of the military and the media. Finally, I will conclude with recommendations for the military and news media alike for effective coverage of future military operations without compromising operational security.

CHAPTER II

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

U.S. military history reveals numerous clashes between the military and the media over the issue of a free press and the need to ensure operational security. During the Civil War, for example, the sixty-seventh article of war provided for court martial, with the possible sentence of death, for anyone supplying military information to the enemy. During wartime, these rules applied to civilians as well as military. Newspapers were an indirect source of military information. The leaders of the Confederacy went to great lengths to obtain copies of major northern newspapers because they often revealed the location of units and vessels. The U.S. War Department tried to forbid newspapers from publishing troop dispositions to no avail.³

During WWI, the U.S. government attempted to protect operational security by imposing censorship through codes, regulations, and guidelines. The newspapers were outraged and legal battles over the issue went to the Supreme Court, and such censorship was ruled unconstitutional.

During WWII, the press was handled differently. A code of wartime practices was issued and voluntary cooperation was requested from the nation's editors and publishers. This system worked fairly well because the press did cooperate voluntarily.

Freedom of the press bears potentially grave risks to

military operations. Unfortunately, the media has not always been cognizant of the potential damage that a report can reveal. Multiple pieces of information, when consolidated and analyzed, can provide significant intelligence to the enemy. A case in point, in 1940 a German agent in the U.S. produced an extremely accurate report of America's potential air armament production capability. He was able to find all the data by reading newspapers, magazines, and books in the public libraries. His report to the German high command on American aircraft production potential for 1941 through 1943 was more accurate than the U.S. War Production Board's report for the same time period.⁴

Media concerns of the operational commander were summed up best by General Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander of European Forces, when he said, "complete wartime coordination and cooperation can never be achieved between the press and military authorities. For the commander, secrecy is a defensive weapon; to the press it is an anathema. The task is to develop a procedure that takes into account an understanding of both viewpoints."⁵

Cooperation between the military and the media began to unravel during the conflict in Vietnam. Here as in the Civil War, America found itself divided over foreign policy and strategy. Compounding the problem, was the use of television to expose the ugly nature of the war. The press has been accused of losing the Vietnam war. No doubt the

press effected public support to wane. However, there is no record of any operation being compromised as a result of press coverage.⁶

Resentment over perceived anti-military bias in the media during the Vietnam war and operational security violations by the press during the fighting in the Falklands influenced United States military thinking. Hence, no arrangements were made to accommodate the news media during Operation Urgent Fury (Grenada).

In October 1983, during Operation Urgent Fury, when the United States invaded the Caribbean island nation of Grenada, the press was barred from the war zone. Journalists and broadcasters protested the government policy. The government and military leadership argued that it was merely ensuring the safety of the media personnel. After the invasion, information was relayed to the public by White House spokespersons, Pentagon officials, and President Reagan himself. Reporters went to Grenada after the ban was lifted and unearthed a number of discrepancies between what they saw and the government reports.⁷

The resulting furor surrounding information handling of military operations by the British in the Falklands and the U.S. military in Grenada concerned many officials. Remembering the legacy of military and media relations in Vietnam, General John H. Vessey, Jr., chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff convened a military-media relations panel.

Major General Winant Sidle, USA(Ret) was chosen to chair the panel composed of both civilian and military members with significant military-media experiences. The Sidle panel was tasked to make recommendations to the question, how can the U.S. military conduct operations in a manner that safeguards the lives of our military and protects the security of operations while keeping the American public informed through the media? The panel interviewed numerous senior media industry representatives and top Army, Navy, and Air Force public affairs officers.

The Sidle panel's report, issued 23 August 1984, was based on the statement of principle which said,

The American people must be informed about United States military operations and the information can best be provided through both the news media and the government. Therefore, the panel believes it essential that the U.S. news media cover U.S. military operations to the maximum degree possible consistent with mission security and safety of U.S. forces.⁸

The report's major impact came from the panel recommendation that the Secretary of Defense establish a standing national media pool which would be deployed on short notice with any future military operations. Neither the media nor the military liked the compromise plan, but they accepted it. The report also offered eight specific recommendations (appendix I) to guide Department of Defense public affairs policy decisions and led to the joint deliberate planning requirements for operational commanders.⁹

Chapter III

Testing the DOD Press Pool

In 1985, the Secretary of Defense established the DOD National Media Pool, consisting of a small contingent of media which remains on alert in Washington, D.C. and is available for immediate, world wide deployment. The decision to deploy the pool is made by the Secretary of Defense with final approval granted by the President. Consistent with military procedures, the DOD press pool has been extensively evaluated since the composition of its membership was finalized. Overall, there have been eight exercise evaluations and four operational deployments.

The first evaluation took place between April 21 and 25, 1985 in Honduras. The test covered the scheduled U.S. Forces Caribbean Exercise Universal Trek. The first test did not get off to a good start as six hours after the alert notification the media had breached security and leaked the story. Even though operational security was compromised, the exercise proved valuable in identifying strengths and weaknesses in both the media's and the military's planning for DOD press pool's deployment, employment and redeployment.

A formal press pool debriefing was conducted immediately upon conclusion of the first exercise. Mr. Michael Burch, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, pointed out that, while working out press pool details, he had a high degree of frustration because media demands were

either excessive or produced stories at the expense of
someone else.¹² Mr. Willensen from Newsweek countered; "The
military took excellent care of press pool personnel physical
needs but failed to provide sufficient support of the
media's professional needs by not providing communication
means to transmit their stories back to the states."¹³ Not
having efficient facilities in Teguagalpa, Honduras, was
realistic when one considers the locations of possible future
conflicts. Still, there were some communications equipment
failures on the USS Nassau which adversely affected both the
media's and the military's efforts to communicate.

The second evaluation took place on the 19th of
September, 1985 in Exercise Double Eagle conducted at Ft.
Campbell, Kentucky. Both operational security and timely
filing were assessed to be greatly improved over that
experienced during Exercise Universal Trek. However, due to
the limited duration and scope of the exercise, the extent of
improvement and whether similar improvement would be evident
in an austere exercise area was uncertain.¹⁴

The third evaluation of the press pool occurred on
December 10 and 11, 1985 in conjunction with the Navy and
Marine exercise Kernal Usher 86-1 conducted off the coast of
southern California. Operational security was maintained for
more than 28 hours. Once released, timely filing of media
reports was accomplished.¹⁵

The fourth evaluation of the media occurred on August 1

and 2, 1986, in conjunction with U.S. Central Command's joint exercise Gallant Eagle conducted at Twenty Nine Palms, California. This exercise involved the largest press pool to date. (13 media representatives and 3 military escorts) As the press pool was departing from Andrews Air Force Base, a reporter contacted the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Public affairs and stated he had heard a rumor that the DOD press pool had deployed. The rumor was dealt with and no story appeared. Media bureau chiefs were debriefed on the incident and instructed to analyze their operations in an effort to identify the cause of the leak and procedurally correct it.

Several more exercises were conducted before the pool's first real-life assignment, in July 1987 for Operation Earnest Will. The Department of Defense convened the pool to cover the reflagging of Kuwaiti tankers and the United States Navy's escort of tankers up and down the Persian Gulf. The news media and the military generally regarded these pools as a successful application of the procedures established by the Sidle commission. Participating reporters agreed that regardless of the difficulties, the American public was better served by the press having covered Operation Earnest Will from the Persian Gulf rather than from Washington, D.C. Secondly, they felt delays in sensitive press releases were an unnecessary measure taken by the Pentagon. The Pentagon's spokesman, Mr. Robert Sims denied the charges of censorship

stating:

None of the reports were censored or changed in any way. Veracity, not timeliness, was the pool's purpose, he argued. The purpose of the pool is not to ensure that they report the news first, but to ensure that news representatives are with our troops on operations where there would otherwise be no independent on-the-scene reporting.¹⁷

On 19 October, 1987, an even larger news coverage dispute surfaced when an Iranian oil platform was shelled in retaliation for a missile attack on a U.S. flagged tanker. To the dismay of the media, this action was not covered as the pool was inexplicably kept on the shore. Military public affairs would later justify the action under Article 51 of International Law as a sovereign states inherent right to self defense since the platforms were being used as terrorist bases. By not ensuring the media was in position to cover this story the Navy was accused of censorship by denying access.

Since then, the media has become highly critical of the media pools. In December 1989, a Pentagon pool was sent to Panama to cover Operation Just Cause. The pool arrived late, was kept out of action and not permitted to disperse. Adequate communications means were not made available further delaying stories and photos for hours. The news media further accused the military of using the pool as the rationale to deny access to journalists already in country.

As complaints and accusations increased in number and fervor, Mr. Pete Williams, ASD/PA, asked Mr. Fred Hoffman, a

former Associated Press Pentagon reporter for twenty three years and member of the Sidle Commission, to research the press pool deployment for Operation Just Cause and provide findings and recommendations.

In his report, Mr. Hoffman cited the Defense Department's excessive concern for secrecy as being responsible in keeping the press pool from reporting the opening battles of the operation. "The pool was called out too late and arrived too late to cover the decisive US assaults in that brief war." ¹⁸ Excessive secrecy was also a factor in preventing timely press pool planning.

The lack of planning led to difficulties in transportation, security, coverage and report filing. Besides accusations of first amendment rights and censorship violations, there were suggestions that the pool was being manipulated to serve the Bush administration's political and diplomatic interests. ¹⁹ Mr. Hoffman could not find evidence to support these accusations and suggested it was good intentions gone bad rather than an actual planned agenda.

Still another issue evolved regarding whether the press pool would originate in Washington, D.C. or be organized with reporters already in Panama. There was never a doubt as to whether to use the press pool, instead there was some heated debate on how to implement the pool. Secretary Cheney decided to use the Washington, D.C. based pool as the Department of Defense was confident that operational security

could be retained, press pool members knew the ground rules,²⁰
and the pool was created for this kind of situation.

In this regard, Mr. Hoffman points out that Secretary Cheney was misinformed. The press pool, as organized by the Sidle Commission, was to provide U.S. News personnel early access to American military action in remote areas where coverage could not normally be accomplished. Panama, with its resident U.S. press corps and existing base structure did not meet the criteria for necessitating activation of the press pool.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs immediately implemented five of Mr. Hoffman's recommendations, began refining six for future implementation, and took the remaining six under consideration. The CJCS incorporated key points from these recommendations into his message dated 182305z May 1990 addressed to the ten CINCs. Chairman Powell reminded these commanders that successful operations are not total successes unless the media aspects are properly²¹
handled. Realizing that the media aspects of military operations will get national and international attention, the Chairman directed the commanders to pay personal attention to the planning of media coverage. They were reminded of the sensitivities of host nation requirements, the benefits of daily unclassified operational briefings, and the necessity²²
for access of activities and key command staff personnel.

Desert Storm presented a challenge to military planners. Media relations were a major concern. Although practiced, the DOD press pool still had some major bugs to be worked out. Remembering the lessons learned from the impact of negative press during Vietnam further highlighted the concern of military planners. Not only was media support important to sustain the will of the people, but through technology, media's role as an intelligence asset had created a greater threat to operational security.

The real and near-real time saturated news coverage of "the Gulf War" was something entirely new. During Vietnam nightly news reports were after the fact film or videotape. Grenada and Panama were over too fast or enveloped with such tight security that little was reported. But Desert Shield/Storm, the first major regional contingency conducted in the age of real-time satellite communications, was relayed around the world as events occurred. The first news on POWs came from the media, not the government. Saddam Hussein used the international stage on CNN to broadcast his side of the story to the world, in attempts to gain support from the Arab world and dissolve the coalition. Baghdad was able to watch CNN and get immediate feedback on SCUD missile strikes in Saudi Arabia and Israel. Guidance to media members on what information could compromise operational security became critical. After one reporter in Israel identified his location and how a SCUD missile had just merely missed it,

news agencies were quickly instructed on how such information could be used to make adjustments and target friendly forces. Needless to say, with their own safety at stake, media representatives began to understand what types of information should not be reported and became more responsible safeguarding information.

Even though the Gulf War was exhaustively covered, the news media made accusations of first amendment violations, censorship, denied access, delayed filing and favoritism in forming press pools. The DOD press pool, which deployed in August 1990, was highly successful for the first two weeks of Operation Desert Shield. The DOD press pool was dissolved as soon as independent reporting was available. The first reporters arrived in Saudi Arabia on 13 August. By December, the Saudi government had begun granting visas and the total number of reporters, editors, photographers, producers and technicians had grown to nearly 800. Just before the war²³ began in January, the total had increased to nearly 1400. Seperate pools formed on the scene, with 159 people in them, when the ground war started. Although most of us in the military would perceive this as more than adequate, the press protested these numbers were grossly inadequate to cover the 900,000 troops stationed in the gulf.

Senior military commanders conducted daily briefings during which they talked directly with the public via live media broadcasts. This face to face exposure between military

leaders and the public provided a great deal of credibility to the U.S. military. The military leadership displayed integrity and concern for the welfare of individual military members and the public liked what it saw. Conversely, the American public saw reporters asking difficult, often contentious and sometimes impolite questions. In the briefings, reporters often disregarded the standing statement that questions involving sensitive information would not be answered. Questions ranged from "What date are we going to start the ground war?" to "Where would you say our forces are most vulnerable to attack, and how could the Iraqis best exploit these weaknesses?" and "Are we planning an amphibious invasion of Kuwait, and if so where would that be?"

To the press's surprise, the public spoke out saying reporters were "too pushy in press briefings, too insensitive to the need for secrecy and too intent on looking for bad news." ²⁴ In the public's eye, the press appeared to be undermining the war effort. If American servicemen and women had lost their lives due wholly or in part to television reporting, the public would have been more incensed at the press and their reporting practices.

When the media cried "foul" after discovering their coverage of U.S. Marine amphibious assault preparations was part of a deception plan creating a diversion to the planned sweep attack, the public was unsympathetic. The American public recognized a legitimate need for deception in time of

war, and appreciated the fact that countless lives were probably saved by this ruse. The military had been very careful not to divulge the intended use of the Marines. Media were simply allowed to arrive at their own, albeit
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erroneous and uncorrect, conclusion.

Due to perceived coverage restrictions the press pool imposed, some reporters turned "freelance" or "pool buster." These reporters, in the competitive spirit of getting the big scoop first, took significant risks to provide what they thought was a fuller picture of the war. Military officials maintained that the press pools were the best means to provide the media access and ensure their safety. CBS correspondent Bob Simon and his three-man crew struck out on their own and were captured by Iraqis near the Kuwaiti
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border and held captive until after the war.

During the planning for war coverage, several bureau chiefs informed ASD/PA that the security of reporters was not the concern of the government. It is unrealistic to ignore the moral dilemma of such a suggestion. Pete Williams comments regarding the captive reporters:

"We were on the phone with CBS News nearly every day that Bob Simon and his crew were missing, and we were greatly relieved when they came through the ordeal okay. And when a group of US journalists was captured in Iraq after the cease fire, four news industry executives wrote to the President, saying no US forces should withdraw from Iraq until the issue of the journalist, was resolved." 27

Live television coverage from behind enemy lines posed a dilemma for military planners attempting to balance a free

press and retaining operational security. Peter Arnett and CNN gave every appearance of providing the enemy a conduit for live demoralizing propaganda directed against the American government through the American public. Fortunately, the American public was astute and instead of losing support of government, chastised the press. "What are they first --
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journalists or Americans." Simultaneously, the military was able to use CNN as an intel asset to confirm Battle Damage Assessment. Luckily for the journalist involved, the Iraqis did not treat American journalists as spies.

With plunging credibility, the press is seeking ways to improve their image and battlefield reporting. In a letter to Secretary Cheney, Stan Cloud from Time Magazine said,

Our sense is that virtually all major news organizations agree that the flow of information to the public was blocked, impeded or diminished by the policies and practices of the Department of the Defense. Pools did not work. Stories and pictures were late or lost. Access to men and women in the field was interfered with by a needless system of escorts and copy review. These conditions meant we could not tell the public the full story of those who fought the nation's battle ... Clearly in Desert Storm the military embraced pools as a long term way of life. The pool system as used in Persian Gulf was not to facilitate news coverage but to control it. 29

Since Desert Storm, the media, represented by six major news organizations, and the ASD/PA have met and agreed on the "Principles of Information" (Appendix II). The media and military have agreed that "open and independent reporting will be the principle means of coverage of U.S. military operations," and that media pools will be used if they are

the only feasible means of providing coverage. The principles attempt to offer some operational security by requiring journalists in combat zones to be accredited and to abide by military ground rules or face expulsion from the combat zone. These requirements were satisfactory with American media representatives, but have no basis in international law for application in foreign lands or to foreign media. The operational commander must plan for all media reporting including that which he has no legitimate control.

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS

The military and news media share the burden of finding the proper balance between a free press and operational security. To date, the military and media have been viewing this problem from the position of adversaries rather than teammates. If a balance is to be struck, both sides will have to shelve their contempt for one another and develop procedures to report military operations without compromising operational security.

Hope is not a method. The planning for media involvement in future military operations must be part of the operational commander's overall strategy for his theater. Media representatives must be brought in on the preparation of the public affairs plan (Annex F) to OPLANS and Conplans. The public affairs plan should receive the same priority of effort and meticulous attention to detail as does the base plan and all supporting annexes. In addition to ensuring operational security, the CINC should be aware that public opinion is often won or lost by media reporting. Not to be used as a propaganda tool, the media must be used by the CINC to communicate to the American public those facts that can be reported without compromising the mission.

Each regional contingency must be closely analyzed as to the nature of the conflict to determine how to integrate the media. What works in one situation may not be appropriate,

feasible, or adequate given a different set of circumstances. The DOD press pool was created as a tool to be used given a unique set of circumstances. Military planners lost sight of this fact and employed the press pool as a panacea without regard to the nature or duration of the conflict. The Pentagon pool as set up by the Sidle Commission has a distinct and proper role. Contingency plans should address whether independent press or press pools will be employed and if the latter, what conditions need to be achieved before press pools can be disbanded in favor of an independent press.

Threat analysis plays an important role in what information is damaging to operational security and what is not. For instance, if the enemy does not possess the capability to react fast enough to defeat friendly action, then one might argue the information should not be withheld from the American public. Given the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, it appears that most potential adversaries could inflict heavy casualties with minimal warning time over extended ranges. Still, each circumstance is unique and should be weighed against present enemy capabilities.

The public affairs plan must address detailed procedures for each form of media. Print journalists have completely different needs than do television and/or radio journalists and therefore planning must address the differences. One

source believes that seeking a compromise by excluding live television coverage of combat operations would greatly reduce the risk of violating operations security. Yet others will argue that television plays a vital role and should not be banned. Planners must account for the diversity of media and develop a plan that operationally and logistically supports each medium's idiosyncrosies. When analyzing courses of action, each medium should be considered in conjunction with the nature of the conflict and enemy capability to exploit media.

Host nation laws and customs may also impose constraints impacting public affairs plans. Careful coordination with country teams and media representatives should be conducted up front so there are no surprises while attempting to cover military operations, especially in a coalition environment. This will require incorporation of more than just American media representatives. Therefore the plan should include foreign media.

Training opportunities should be sought for both military and media members to improve interoperability and develop clear operating guidelines which are mutually supporting. The military has made a significant effort to train for future combat including media involvement. In addition to rotating officers through public relations firms, the military has incorporated media events into combat training exercises. The news organizations are not

dedicating a great effort in training journalists to cover the military, therefore the CINC must invite the media to cover unit training during peacetime before a crisis occurs. By doing so, commanders can educate the media on how we are training to fight the next war; explain how we are coping with budget cuts; and foster a relationship of mutual trust and respect.

Media reporting of military operations will have a direct impact on theater success. The operational commander must develop an effective plan that ensures operational security while providing for a free press. The media must be incorporated onto the team rather than treated as an adversary.

APPENDIX I

CJCS MEDIA-MILITARY RELATIONS PANEL REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1:

That public affairs planning for military operations be conducted concurrently with operational planning. This can be assured in the great majority of cases by implementing the following:

a. Review all joint planning documents to assure that JCS guidance in public affairs matters is adequate.

b. When sending implementing orders to Commanders in Chief in the field, direct CINC planners to include considerations of public affairs information aspects.

c. Inform the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) of an impending military operation at the earliest possible time. This information should appropriately come from the Secretary of Defense.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

When it becomes apparent during military operational planning that news media pooling provides the only feasible means of furnishing the media with early access to an operation, planning should provide for the largest possible press pool that is practical and minimize the length of time that the pool will be necessary before "full coverage" is feasible.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

That, in conjunction with the use of pools, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend to the Secretary of Defense that he study the matter of whether to use a pre-established and constantly updated accreditation of notification list of correspondents in case of a military operation for which a pool is required or the establishment of a news agency list for use in the same circumstances.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

That a basic tenet governing media access to military operations should be voluntary compliance by the media with security guidelines of ground rules established and issued by the military. These rules should be as few as possible and should be worked out during the planning process for each operation. Violations would mean exclusion of the correspondent(s) concerned from further coverage of the operation.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Public affairs planning for military operations should include sufficient equipment and qualified military personnel whose function is to assist correspondents in covering the operation adequately.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

Planners should carefully consider media communications requirements to assure the earliest feasible availability. However, these communications must not interfere with combat and combat support operations. If necessary and feasible, plans should include communications facilities dedicated to the news media.

RECOMMENDATION 7:

Planning factors should include provisions for intra-and inter-theater transportation support for the media.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

To improve media-military understanding and cooperation:

a. CJCS should recommend to the Secretary of Defense that a program be undertaken by ASD (PA) for top military affairs representatives to meet with news organization leadership, to include meetings with individual news organizations, on a reasonably regular basis to discuss mutual problems, including relationships with the media during military operations and exercises. This program should begin as soon as possible.

b. Enlarge programs already underway to improve military understanding of the media via public affairs instruction in service schools, to include media participation when possible.

c. Seek improved media understanding of the military through more visits by commanders and line officers to news organizations.

d. CJCS should recommend that the Secretary of Defense host at an early date, a working meeting with representatives of broadcast news media to explore the special problems of ensuring military security when and if there is real-time or near real-time news media audio-visual coverage of a battlefield and, if special problems exist, how they can best be dealt with consistent with the basic principle set for the at the beginning of the report.

APPENDIX II

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

We believe these principles should govern future arrangements for news coverage of the United States military in combat:

1. Open and independent reporting will be the principal means of coverage of U.S. military operations.
2. Pools are not to serve as the standard means of covering U.S. military operations. Pools may sometimes provide the only feasible means of early access to a military operation. Pools should be as large as possible and disbanded at the earliest opportunity -- within 24 to 36 hours when possible. The arrival of early access pools will not cancel the principle of independent coverage for journalists already in the area.
3. Even under conditions of open coverage, pools may be appropriate for specific events, such as those at extremely remote locations or where space is limited.
4. Journalists in a combat zone will be credentialed by the U.S. military and will be required to abide by a clear set of military security ground rules that protect U.S. forces and their operations. Violation of the ground rules can result in suspension of credentials and expulsion from the combat zone of the journalist involved. News organizations will make their best efforts to assign experienced journalists to combat operations and to make them familiar with U.S. military operations.
5. Journalists will be provided access to all major military units. Special Operations restrictions may limit access in some cases.
6. Military public affairs officers should act as liaisons but should not interfere with the reporting process.
7. Under conditions of open coverage, field commanders should be instructed to permit journalists to ride on military vehicles and aircraft whenever feasible. The military will be responsible for the transportation of pools.
8. Consistent with its capabilities, the military will supply PAOs with facilities to enable timely, secure, compatible transmission of pool material and will make these facilities available whenever possible for filing independent coverage. In cases when government facilities are unavailable, journalists will, as always, file by any other means available. The military will not ban communications

systems operated by news organizations, but electromagnetic operations security in battlefield situations may require limited restrictions on the use of such systems.

9. These principles will apply as well to the operations of the standing DoD National Media Pool system.

Note: News organizations and the military could not agree on a principle, proposed by the news organizations, regarding security review. See attached.

ATTACHMENT ON SECURITY REVIEW

The news organizations originally proposed ten principles. One dealt with security reviews and said: "News material - words and pictures - will not be subject to security review."

The Pentagon proposed instead a principle that said: "Military operational security may require review of news material for conformance to reporting ground rules."

This fundamental disagreement could not be bridged.

News media statement

The news organizations are convinced that journalists covering U.S. forces in combat must be mindful at all times of operational security and the safety of American lives. News organizations strongly believe that journalists will abide by clear operational security ground rules. Prior security review is unwarranted and unnecessary.

We believe that the record in Operation Desert Storm, Vietnam, and other wars supports the conclusion that journalists in the battlefield can be trusted to act responsibly.

We will challenge prior security review in the event that the Pentagon attempts to impose it in some future military operation.

Department of Defense statement

The military believes that it must retain the option to review news material, to avoid the inadvertent inclusion in news reports of information that could endanger troop safety or the success of a mission.

Any review system would be imposed only when operational security is a consideration - for example, the very early stages of a contingency operation or sensitive periods in

combat. If security review were imposed, it would be used for one very limited purpose: to prevent disclosure of information which, if published, would jeopardize troop safety or the success of a military operation. Such a review system would not be used to seek alterations in any other aspect of content or to delay timely transmission of news material.

Security review would be performed by the military in the field, giving the commander's representative the opportunity to address potential ground rule violations. The reporter would either change the story to meet ground rule concerns and file it, or file it and flag for the editor whatever passages were in dispute. The editor would then call the Pentagon to give the military one last chance to talk about potential ground rule violations.

The Defense Department believes that the advantage of this system is that the news organization would retain control of the material throughout the review and filing process. The Pentagon would have two chances to address potential operational security violations, but the news organization would make the final decision about whether to publish the disputed information. Under principle four, violations of the ground rules could result in expulsion of the journalist involved from the combat zone.

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